

THE LEISURE HOUR.

A FAMILY JOURNAL OF INSTRUCTION AND RECREATION.

"BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,—AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND."—Cowper.



MISS SLADE PUTS HER BROTHER'S DISCERNMENT TO THE TEST.

CHAMBERCOMBE.

A TALE OF NORTH DEVONSHIRE.

VI.

THE sailor whose unexpected tidings broke up the party, just as the darkening shades gave promise of lighted lamps and drawn curtains and a snug evening, belonged to the crew that Mr. Sharpin had engaged to man his lugger whilst looking out for the "Granada," and was selected by that officer to accompany him on his expedition to Hele as soon as he heard of the wreck. Though resident in Ilfracombe, he was a native of Hele. There

he had been brought up with Capern and others of the same stamp, had lent a hand in most of the suspicious doings that had given to the village a disreputable name, and would have joined the wrecking party on the previous night had no order to "be in the way" prevented it. Attentively observant, and amongst strangers taciturn, he gathered more information than he gave, and was specially useful to his friends at a distance, by picking up all the news that was going, and retailing it at their convivial meetings; so that Mr. Sharpin's selection was somewhat unfortunate.

Released from duty, when the officer accepted Mr.

Collins's invitation, he turned towards the village with feelings of intense satisfaction, which he evinced when out of sight by a variety of frolicsome antics, such as sailors are wont to indulge in, and by catches of songs expressive of a light-heartedness which, from his previously stolid look, one would have thought him incapable of realizing. In the house of Creber he found an assembly of old associates, and heard from Capern how matters stood at Oatway's.

"Then the hounds are unkenelled," remarked a fisherman who was lolling in the window-seat.

"But there's no scent where there's salt water," answered Capern. "The baying of dogs and the brine of the ocean are as opposed to each other as Higgins and sense"—a comparison which raised a hearty laugh.

"The constable's larger than ever," said Perkins—"as proud of following in the wake of that government cockboat as if he were a flag-ship."

"The more you stroke a cat, the more it sets its back up," rejoined Capern. "And the worst of such fellows is that they're never convinced. He'll be spying into every hole and corner for days, a-making more fuss of his authority than the man-of-war's man whom its Perkins's particular duty to take care of."

"To hoodwink," said Creber. "Eh?" and they all laughed.

"Higgins has never had such a chance in his life," observed the fisherman; "so let him make much of the commissioners' lace and buttons: he'll burn out in time."

"But the officer," said a voice from the chimney-corner, "won't go out without an extinguisher. He'll be down on some of us with his Lidford law as a token of his good opinion, if we don't make haste and nick him with a tub to the whale."

"That's true," responded Capern; "and so, Perkins, mind what you're at, and go up to the hall at once afore they've done their eye-wetting. You'll frighten Mr. Soper by a hint that Oatway means settling accounts with him soon. And the commissioner will go fishing in other waters when he learns that the lad has had to run for it—turned out, you know. But be sure you take care of your tongue, Perkins; spoken words are masters."

The result of his interview with the party at the hall has been noticed. The entertainment came suddenly to an end, and the officer and his sub walked hastily to Ilfracombe, where they consulted with other functionaries as to the measures which should be taken for discovering and securing the youth William Oatway, who had left his home in the morning.

The youth himself was altogether unconscious of the interest he had excited amongst the officials of the town; nor did the thought of pursuers trouble him as he settled for the night in the hostelry of a large hamlet not far distant from the wild and mountainous range of land which the people call Dartmoor. He had ridden, in company with a trusty servant, cross country, avoiding all usual tracks, especially at first, as a matter of precaution, and proceeding at a rapid pace, to accomplish as long a journey as possible before night set in; and, as they passed under the swinging sign of the "Royal Oak," and tramped through the pebbled gateway into the stable-yard, the chimes rang out a tune that sent him back in thought to his father's hearth, where Rebecca had many a time sung the notes to touching lines, ascribed to a Devonshire poet of the name of Brown.

In the morning the servant returned with the horses, and William pursued his journey on foot. The country through which he passed was diversified by hill and

dale, moor and mountain, rippling stream and humming cascade; but his mind was too much engaged with himself, and with the change which a few hours had wrought in his circumstances, to admit of an attentive survey of scenes that otherwise would have delighted his eye and impressed his heart. He felt like an exile from home, a wanderer in the wide world, having no idea of the character of the relatives he was in search of, or the reception he would meet with on reaching his mother's birth-place. One thing, however, he had determined on—to be a man; and, falling back continually on this determination when thoughts troubled him and feelings grew strong, he brushed from his eyes the tears that now and then suffused them, and trudged on bravely, hoping for the best. He had provided himself with provisions for the way; but, having overtaken a country girl whilst passing through a pleasant glade, and obtained some information respecting his route, he was nothing loath to accept a modest invitation to rest himself in a cottage a stone's throw from the path. The fine form and lovely face of the maiden would have made a study for a painter, though generally the personal attractions of the peasantry in those parts are of no common order; and when he entered the cottage, and was greeted by a smile and word of welcome from the mother, he thought, as he gazed on her countenance, that he had never seen anything so beautiful. Three bare-legged, raggedly-dressed, rosy children were playing on the lime-ashed floor; and, though there were evidences enough of homeliness, and even of poverty, yet everything was clean and tidy. The cottage itself, a favourable specimen of the Tudor period, was exceedingly pretty, the grey stones of which it was built being furred with moss and mantled with ivy, whilst the porch was covered with woodbine, and around the casement a rose-bush spread its thorny arms. The roof was of thatch, and just above it there peeped the topmost branches of an elder-tree and a mountain-ash, and in the strip of garden before the door were faded hollyhocks and sunflowers which, a month or so before, had rivalled each other in the brilliancy of their colours.

"You look cruel tired, young gentleman," said the woman; "and, if you'll take a drink of milk and a slice of our barley loaf, you shall be heartily welcome."

"Thank you," replied William. "I'll take the milk, if you please, and rest a few minutes, only a few minutes, as I must cross the Tavy below Tavistock before the evening."

"Below Tavistock? You've a long ways yet to go then, sir," she rejoined, in a commiserating tone.

"Oh, I don't mind the distance; but do you know those parts?"

"Yes, I lived with a family over at Wallredon when I was a young woman; and I was born not far from there."

"You remember Sir Richard Grenville, then?"

"Yes; and Lady Howard too; but they lived at the great house, and I was servant at the Lodge."

"At the Lodge?"

"Yes, sure, sir, with the Slades; and two of the family are there yet. But you're faint, young gentleman," she added, observing the youth grow pale.

"It's nothing," he said, recovering himself; "but was it a large family?"

"No, not large. There was maister and missus, a son, and two daughters. The youngest was married, a few years after I left, to a north-country gentleman; but they tell'd me that she died of a broken heart, poor thing. She was a sweet young lady, and cou'dn't bear the rough ways that her husband took to."

Keeping down the great sob that would have relieved

his heart, and hiding his face with the basin from which he drank slowly whilst stifling his emotions, he listened as she finished her story. "Her brother and sister have remained unmarried, and live together at the Lodge—a purty place, sir, I can assure you. It's a good deal changed since I lived there, but a more delightful spot it's impossible to find the country round."

"It's very near the place you were asking for," said the daughter, "but the other side of the river; and mind, sir, how you go over the clam, for it's slippery in wet weather, and wants a steady head when the waters are out."

"I'm accustomed to that sort of thing," he replied; "and I wish I were as sure of being light-hearted as I am of not being light-headed. But what sort of people are the Slades?"

"Well, I can't tell you a great deal," said the mother. "Miss Maria is a very grave and particular lady, I'm told. The servants look up to her, they say, even more than they do to Mr. Robert, who has to do with mines, and is a very rich gentleman. He's fond of sporting, which brings him across here sometimes; and a fine-looking man he is."

Thanking her for her information, and leaving behind him a token of his gratitude which astonished and delighted the cottagers, he started again on his journey, taking such short cuts as the girl had described, until he reached Crowndale, the birthplace of Drake, a sequestered, sheltered spot, where the impetuous Tavy grows sober for awhile, and gently glides through the meadows, with scarce a ripple to say that it has been and will be a brawling stream, rushing over pebbles and foaming amongst rocks, until it settles down once for all into a staid and steady river. The valley is terminated by rugged, well-wooded hills, which our traveller climbed and crossed, descending thence into another vale, and passing Wallredon House, with its grand entrance and noble avenue of beech-trees, until the grey-looking hall of which he was in quest caught his eye in the distance, awakening feelings in his bosom which, despite his resolution, almost unmanned him.

Admitting himself by massive wooden gates that stood at the entrance of the garden, he followed a winding path which brought him directly in front of the Lodge, a heavy-looking building, with broad mullioned windows, and an embattled parapet, above which sloped a high roof, graced by a cluster of towering chimneys terminating in ornamented caps. A handsome porch, with a front of carved stone, stood at the entrance, which was guarded by an immense wolf-dog, whose hoarse, threatening bark caused William to pause, and brought to one of the windows a female, who scrutinized the stranger attentively.

"What do you please to want, sir?" said the servant who made his appearance in the porch.

"I want to see Mr. Slade, or Miss Slade."

"Walk this way, sir, if you please—quiet, Wolf;" and he was ushered into a room panelled with oak and hung with family paintings. The fireplace was large, and blazing logs on andirons steamed and cracked, throwing a lurid light around the apartment, which was furnished with high-back chairs and sofas, and darkened by heavy velvet curtains that graced the window.

"And here," thought William, as he looked around, "my mother spent her childhood. Here were passed her happiest days. That face, perhaps—a lovely face that smiled on him from the canvas—"was her face. There is the gentle eye, and the loving expression, and the golden hair that Rebecca has told me of so often. Is that indeed my mother?"

But the entrance of a stately lady, handsome of face, and primly but richly dressed, with a coiffure that magnified her height, terminated his reflections, and threw him back on the manliness in which he had been schooling himself.

"You wish to speak to me, young gentleman," she said, with an air of dignity and at the same time of condescension; "may I ask your business?"

"I not only wish to speak to you, madam," replied William, in his open, simple-hearted way, "but, by your permission, to stay with you for a time. I am your nephew—my name's Oatway."

"My nephew? I had almost forgotten that I had a nephew; but sorrowful memories as well as pleasant ones are brought up when we least expect them. Your name is Oatway. It's a name we are not fond of repeating. But you have another name."

"Yes, madam—William."

"Ah, William. That's a good old English name, and has a worthy origin first and last. You were so called after my father—after your mother's father; and if you bear it half so worthily, you will live to some purpose. Sit down on the sofa;" and, taking a chair herself, she scanned his features closely.

"Yes, there's a likeness," she said, in a softened tone and manner; "you're my sister's child I see;" and, turning to the painting which had already riveted his attention, she added, "A sweet face, isn't it? Poor Rosa! Let me kiss the mother in the son once more;" and she pressed her lips on the brow of the boy for her sister's sake.

"And now, William," she observed, with a smile, "I must question you a little. But here comes brother. I should like to see whether he will recognise any likeness to the family."

A stout, fresh-looking gentleman, whose years had entered on a fifth decade, stepped briskly into the room and saluted his sister, who advanced to meet him, before he noticed the presence of the youth.

"You've a visitor, Maria," he said, in astonishment, "and might have advised me thereof."

"It's no matter, Robert," she replied; "for guess who it is."

"You don't want to burn me for a wizard, do you?" he said, laughing. "I hardly know myself, Maria; and how can you expect me to know strangers?"

"You *shall* guess, however. The young gentleman will have no objection to be well looked at; so we'll go to the window and put your discernment to the test."

"Well?" she said, inquiringly, after a pause.

"Well, he looks both sober and spirited; but if we could get a laugh out of him, I might judge much better. Perhaps he's Oliver's youngest."

The lad smiled, and the aunt said, "Nonsense, Robert; look again: you *must* guess."

"You'll be asking me to tell his fortune next," he answered, jocosely. "But I declare, Maria, he laughs like yourself. There's something, too, in his eye that reminds me both of your sweetness and your spirit. He might be your own son, sister."

"You are very complimentary, Robert," she replied; "but do you really notice anything of the Slades about him?"

"Then he *is* a Slade, I suppose; though I had no idea we had any relatives left of that name."

"My name is Oatway," said William, wishing to reveal himself.

"Rosa's son, Robert," observed the aunt, as her brother compressed his lips and looked serious. "He has taken us by surprise, and will become more com-

municative during dinner. We loved the dead; and for her sake we'll deal kindly with the living."

"Yes, yes," said the brother, brightening up; "no one is very talkative when savoury viands are appealing to the senses. But, whilst *they* are being satisfied, we shall perhaps grow satisfied with each other."

And so they did. The dinner passed off pleasantly, and all that William knew he told. Mindful of Rebecca's lessons, and remembering a saying of Capern, "Truth may be blamed, but cannot be shamed," he related the history of the last three days in a straightforward way, saying as little about his father as was consistent with the real facts of the case, and dwelling on the feeling and affection he had manifested at his departure from home.

"You'll be wanted, William," said his uncle, gravely; "and, as there must be parties in the north who know of your mother's connections, we shall have visitors ere long that we would rather dispense with."

"They shall go as quickly as they come," answered the youth, colouring. "I'll start for Plymouth, and go to sea."

"No, no," said the aunt; "your story not only clears you from all blame, but makes you the hero of a praiseworthy action; and, whilst I like an independent spirit, and don't want to be plagued with Government scouts, we'll not let Rosa's child leave our house that way. Brother and I will consider the matter, and you shall know the result in the morning."

They breakfasted early, and an immediate journey westward was proposed by Mr. Slade.

"We have settled," he said, "to kill two birds with one stone, if we can—to get out of the way of the Government officers, and to make some provision for the future. I am not so active as I used to be, and shall be glad to have you trained to assist me at the mine, provided you are disposed to qualify yourself, and carry a good character. There is a friend of mine in Cornwall whose house will be a shelter for the present, and with whom you might spend a few years to make yourself up in the science of mining, and of farming too, if you please. What do you think of that, William?"

"Our affection for Rosa has given you a place in our hearts," said the aunt. "Most of our relatives are dead; and we should like some one to think of and love—some one, too, to think of and love us. You're our own flesh and blood."

The tears started into his eyes, and a sob prevented an immediate answer. "I'll go anywhere, and be anything," he said, at last, "provided my father has no objection; and if he has, I shall not love you the less, for all your kindness."

"What can your father object?" remarked the aunt.

"Nothing, if he's asked," replied William; "but, unasked, he would object altogether."

"Perhaps so; and I like you all the better, William, for thinking of your father. There's a commandment, with promise, that prescribes the duties of sons and daughters; and to obey is to be blessed."

"Rebecca would have spoken such words," said the youth. "I wish you knew Rebecca; you would love her as my mother did. How lonely she must be without me, and how lonely I shall be without her; but—"

"But you'll find other friends and companions," interposed his uncle, for the purpose of inducing thoughts less sentimental as he conceived; "and we'll take to horse immediately in search of them, journeying in hunting trim, and allowing no grass to grow under our feet. So, then, as our betters were wont to say. 'Westward lo!'"

FOTHERINGHAY.

BY CUTBERT BEEDE.

I.

FOTHERINGHAY is a name distinguished in historic annals; but, although from the first its castle was connected with royalty, it would appear in every age to have brought to its princely possessors a heritage of misery and blood. Balliol, York, Plantagenet, and Stuart alike found in Fotheringhay either a troubled home, or a gloomy prison, or the grave of a violent death. Originally built by Mary Stuart's ancestor—that Simon de St. Liz. who had married the great niece of William the Conqueror, and who had built a second fortress upon the river Nene at Northampton—the old castle of Fotheringhay had been held by the luckless Balliols; and its last possessor was that Mary of Valence, Countess of Pembroke, whose husband fell in a tournament upon their bridal day, and whom the poet Gray has celebrated as the

"Sad Chatillon, on her bridal morn
That wept her bleeding love."

She passed the long days of her virgin-widowhood at Fotheringhay, devoting herself to the services of religion, and her fortune to the foundation of Pembroke Hall, in the University of Cambridge, to perpetuate the memory of her husband of a few hours.

Her successor in the lordship was Edmund Langley, the fifth son of Edward III., who rebuilt the castle, and left it to his son Edward Duke of York. He did not, however, live long to enjoy it, for he was slain at the head of his vanguard of English archers in the famous fight of Agincourt, where he was stifled by the heat and by the enemy thronging upon him—for, says the old Chronicle, "being a fatte man, he was smouldered to death." It was his dying wish that he should be buried in the collegiate church of Fotheringhay, which he himself had founded; and there he was accordingly interred on December 1, 1415. The castle then passed to his brother, Richard Plantagenet, Earl of Cambridge, who was beheaded, on suspicion of being engaged in a conspiracy against Henry V. His son, Richard Duke of York, was the next who held it; and he, too, inherited the Fotheringhay fate, meeting a violent death at the battle of Wakefield Green, together with his second son, Edmund Earl of Rutland, a lad of twelve, who was barbarously slain in cold blood by Lord Clifford. The bodies of the father and son were removed from Pontefract to Fotheringhay with the greatest pomp, and with a ceremonial of which a full account has been handed down to us, and were buried in the collegiate church on July 22, 1466. Richard's widow, Cecily Duchess of York—who was the "proud Cis" of the familiar proverb—survived her husband thirty-six years; and, as the "sad Chatillon" had done before her, passed the chief part of her widowhood at Fotheringhay, where also she found her grave.* Her son, Edward IV., occasionally

* The pronunciation of her Christian name, together with that of her father, is curiously and phonetically shown by the inscription on the east side of the Communion-table in Fotheringhay Church:—"Sissily, Dutchesse of York, Daughter to Raulfe Nevell, first Earl of Westmorland." She and the Dukes of York were first buried in the choir; but at the dissolution, when the choir was pulled down by the Duke of Northumberland, their bodies were dug up, and (according to Fuller) lay in the churchyard without any monument until Queen Elizabeth visited Fotheringhay, in 1573, and ordered the bodies to be re-buried in the church, and appropriate monuments to be erected. On opening the coffin of the Duchess Cecily there was found about her neck a silver ribbon with a pardon from Rome, penned in a very fine Roman hand, as fair and fresh to be read as if it had been written yesterday. Such was the account given by Mr. Creuso, a gentleman who dwelt in the college at the same time, to Henry Peacham, who mentions it in his "Complete Gentleman," p. 180.

fixed his residence at Fotheringhay, coming there on one occasion by water from Croyland to join his queen, and, on another occasion, granting an audience here to Alexander, who entered into a covenant to do fealty and homage for the realm of Scotland within six months after he had obtained possession of the crown. During her widowed residence at Fotheringhay, the Duchess Cecily not only had to mourn the tragical fate of her little grandsons, Edward v and his brother, but also to have her grief made more poignant by the thought that their murderer was her own son, who had been born within the walls of Fotheringhay; that Duke of Gloucester who, as King Richard III, was the last of the Plantagenets, and who, having waded to the throne through blood, quitted it by a violent end, yet not before he had accused his widowed mother of the grossest profligacy. Shakespeare, therefore, in his play of "Richard III," makes the duchess say of him, "He is my son, ay, and therein my shame;" and again,

"And I for comfort have but one false gloss
That grieves me when I see my shame in him."

And the Shakespearian reader will also call to mind that scene where, in such terrible colours, she depicts her son's character from his very birth at Fotheringhay: where his infancy was "tetchy and wayward;" and then solemnly curses him with this prophetic malediction:—

"Bloody thou art, bloody will be thy end:
Shame serves thy life, and doth thy death attend."

Such was the king of England who was born in Fotheringhay Castle, and from whose mother Mary Queen of Scots was fourth in descent.

After the death of Duchess Cecily, in 1495, the castle was given by Henry VII to his queen Elizabeth, who was the sole representative of the House of York. Henry VIII settled it in dower upon his unfortunate queen Catharine of Arragon, who repaired it at great cost, and would seem to have been attached to it, until her royal husband wished to turn it into her prison, when she declared that "to Fotheringhay she would not go, unless bound with cart-ropes and carried thither." But in Mary's reign Fotheringhay really became a state-prison, when Edward Courtney, Earl of Devonshire, was removed thither from the Tower, on a charge of having been implicated in Sir Thomas Wyatt's conspiracy.

Such was the previous history of Fotheringhay Castle up to the period of that terrible tragedy—the imprisonment and execution of Mary Queen of Scots, which has, as it were, swallowed up the memory of all that had gone before, and caused the name of Fotheringhay to be associated with, and dedicated to, a recollection of the most touching royal death-scene in our country's annals. Into the details of that scene it is not here my province to enter. We have to do now with the prison, and not its prisoner; with the past and present of Fotheringhay itself, and not with the doom of its most illustrious and beautiful captive. She who, as Wordsworth has sung, "Dear to the loves, and to the graces vowed," landed on the Cambrian shore,

"With step prelusive to a long array
Of woes and degradations hand in hand—
Weeping captivity and shuddering fear,
Stilled by the ensanguined block of Fotheringhay"

—though the poet is scarcely correct as to "the shuddering fear." It may have dwelt in the guilty bosom of Elizabeth, but was certainly not shown by Mary, even in the supreme moment of her fate. Yet, if the verse of the poet is faulty, there is a verse in a certain Book which, could a voice have gone up from the banquet-hall of Fotheringhay, might have thus denounced the English queen: "Thou hast consulted shame to thyself by cutting off many people, and hast sinned against thy

soul. For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

Up to this last chapter of its history, Fotheringhay had doomed its princely tenants to more or less of misery; and the majority of the royal personages who were connected with it appear, either in their own persons or in those of their nearest relatives, to have met their end by violent deaths. Its history was written in characters of blood; and it would almost seem as if the tragical associations that thronged its towers should cause Queen Elizabeth (who had visited the castle in 1573, and had busied herself by putting up new monuments in the church to the slaughtered Dukes of York) to deliberately select Fotheringhay as the last prison of her regal victim, and as a fortress over whose portals might have been written, "All hope abandon, ye who enter here." It is, at any rate, a noteworthy circumstance that, in the words of Mr. Nichols,* "Fotheringhay has been distinguished beyond any other place in Britain, except the capital, by the aggravated misfortunes of royalty;" and its tragical records found their consummation in that dread event which, as it were, overwhelmed the castle with so great a shame that nothing less than its complete annihilation would answer the demands of poetic justice.

Probably some such feeling as this existed from the first, and gave a colourable pretext to the popular story (which is even entertained by Nichols and other historians), that no sooner had James I come to the throne than he caused Fotheringhay Castle to be demolished, in order to efface all traces of his mother's execution. The local poet who, in 1797, wrote the poem of "Antona's Banks,"† thus enshrines the vulgar error in his verse:

"In darkest night for ever veil the scene
When thy cold tomb received the captive Queen:
For this has Time erased thee from his page,
And filial justice, with vindictive rage,
Burst on thy princely towers with whelming tide,
Nor left one vestige to relate thy pride."

Unfortunately for those who would desire this story to be true, King James did nothing half so poetical or full of sympathetic "filial justice." On the contrary, although the castle would appear to have been uninhabited after the execution of Mary Stuart, and up to the end of Elizabeth's reign, yet no sooner had James ascended the throne than he turned the castle to account by bestowing it on some of his courtiers. He gave it to three proprietors; and when the first of these (Lord Mountjoy, Earl of Devonshire) died, the other two (Sir Edward Blount and Joseph Earth, Esq.) conveyed the castle and lordship to his natural son, Mountjoy, who was afterwards created Earl of Newport. King James died on March 27th, 1625; and that the castle was standing in its integrity at that date is fully proved from the survey made on April 3rd, 1625, when it was thus described:—"The castle is the capital house, built of stone, moated with a double moate. A fair court within the castle; a building upon a mount, eight or sixteen square,

* The distinguished historian of Leicestershire. See his "History and Antiquities of Fotheringhay," p. v, 1787—a scarce work, but, for the most part, embodied in the popular "Historic Notices of Fotheringhay," by the late Archdeacon Bonney. See also Bridge's "History of Northamptonshire," and Miss Strickland's "Queens of Scotland," vii. 420.

† The river Nene was sometimes called Avon. See Leland's "Itinerary," vol. i., fol. 4-6. "Foderingey stondithe on the farther rise of Avon, as I entered into the towne. The bridge to Foderingey over Avon is of timber. The castelle of Foderingey is fair and meately strong, with dobie ditches, and hath a kepe very ancient and strong. There be very fair lodgyns in the castel. And as I hard Catarine of Spaine did great costs in late tyme of refreshing of it. This castel longid of late tymes to Edmunde of Langeley, Edward the iij'd's sunne, and so lineally to the Dukes of York." The Warwickshire Avon takes its rise in Northamptonshire, but has not any connection with the Nene.

with lower and upper chambers, to which you ascend by stairs, and then descending towards the hall, which is large and spacious. On the left hand the court is the chapel, and goodly lodgings: the great dining-room well garnished at present with pictures; next the hall are the buttery and kitchen; and, at the other end of the kitchen, a convenient yard for wood, with large brew-houses and back-houses, and other offices. From the gate going out of the yard, there is a great yard half encompassing the castle, going round about to the first gate, and a great barn in the west side of the said yard; a gate house, and another ruinous house in the east corner of the same. The river Nene on the south side serves for the outer moate, and the mill-brooke on the east for the inner moate; between the mill-brooke and castle was a great pond. The gate and fore-front of the house looks full north; and as soon as you are passed the inner drawbridge, at the gate there are some stairs leading up to some fair lodgings, and up higher into the wardrobe, and so to the fetter-lock on the top of the mount, on the north-west corner of the castle, which is built round of eight or sixteen square, with chambers as above." There is nothing said of demolition in this survey; and it is self-evident that, if James was inspired with that "filial revenge" which popular tradition has ascribed to him, he would have demolished Fotheringhay as soon as he had the power to do so. The popular tradition, indeed, goes still further than the castle, and includes the whole town of Fotheringhay in the devastating mandate of King James. He laid a curse upon the town, and would have it burnt stick and stone, says the legend; and it is in consequence of this curse (at any rate the people think so) that so many alarming fires have happened in the village. Yet, in the teeth of popular tradition, this fact stands clear, that Mary Stuart's son reigned twenty-two years, and that Fotheringhay Castle was standing after his death, and was then "a capital house," with its great dining-hall well garnished with pictures. This fact overrides the statement of those who, although rejecting the popular tradition, yet say (as was said at the meeting of the Archaeological Institute at Peterborough in August 1861, and at the meeting of the Lincoln and Northampton Society in September 1859) that the castle having fallen into decay, and James having no use for it, he did not care to repair it.

And, indeed, did not Fuller the historian visit the castle, and there (as he tells us) read the following couplet from an old ballad* written on one of the windows with a diamond by the Queen of Scots herself?—

"From the top of all my trust,
Mishap hath laid me in the dust."

Now, as Fuller was not born till the year 1608, when James had already been king for five years, we have here another proof that his filial revenge, if ever exercised upon the destruction of Fotheringhay, was at any rate allowed to slumber for many years after he had the power of gratifying his desires. Fuller was born within ten miles of Fotheringhay, at the rectory-house of Aldwinkle, All Saints, the adjoining parish to Aldwinkle, St. Peter's, in whose rectory-house the poet Dryden was born; so that he probably visited the castle somewhere about the time when the survey was made in 1625, in which year, being then of the age of seventeen, Fuller took his B.A. degree at Cambridge. That survey, taken after the death of King James, does not make special mention of the castle being out of repair, or in a ruinous

condition, except with some of the buildings in the court-yard. We are, however, driven to the presumption that the general condition of the castle was such that the expense of restoring it to its former grandeur so alarmed its then possessor, Mountjoy, Earl of Newport,* that he preferred to dismantle the building and dispose of the materials. This sadly matter-of-fact statement is altogether out of harmony with the more poetical version of popular tradition; but, although it annihilates the pleasing evidence of James's filial affection, it paves the way for a record of an act precisely opposite in its nature by a more distant relative of Mary Queen of Scots. This was Sir Robert Bruce Cotton, Bart., so well known as the founder of the Cottonian Library, given to the British Museum by his grandson, Sir John Cotton, who, being descended from the royal family of Scotland, was of kin to Mary Stuart. The relationship was recognised by King James, who, when Sir Robert appeared at court, was wont to address him as "cousin;" and Sir Robert was not a little proud (as he well might be) of his royal ancestors, although he took a somewhat remarkable way of showing and publicly airing his connection with them by erecting complimentary monuments to their memory in Conington Church, Huntingdonshire, where they may be seen, together with his own monument and others to various members of the family.

If King James, according to popular tradition, was so desirous (which he was not) of annihilating every vestige of the scene of his mother's murder, it is evident that her cousin, Sir Robert Bruce Cotton—who, happily for posterity, had a collector's love of accumulating and preserving anything and everything on which he could lay hands—was equally anxious to treasure any memorials of that eventful transaction. Therefore, when Mountjoy, Earl of Newport, dismantled Fotheringhay Castle, and disposed of its materials, Sir Robert Cotton seized upon the golden opportunity of acquiring a memento of his "cousin's" execution. At this time Sir Robert had been living (when he was not at Cotton House, Westminster) at the family mansion in the little village of Denton, Huntingdonshire, where he was born on January 22, 1571,† and which, as the crow flies, is not seven miles distant from Fotheringhay; and he was desirous of building a new mansion on his Conington estate about three miles from Denton, on the other side of the great north road. Conington had come to the Cottons through the Bruces, having descended to them from David I, who had married the widow of Simon de St. Liz, who built Fotheringhay Castle; so that there was a strong link of connection between Conington and Fotheringhay long before it was strengthened by Sir Robert Bruce Cotton.

* He died in the garrison at Oxford, Feb. 12, 1645, and was succeeded in his title by his only surviving son Henry, the last Earl of Newport, who died in 1679, without ever having enjoyed the estate, which (as appears from a deed preserved in the Fotheringhay church-chest, and printed by Nichols in the Appendix to his book) had been alienated by his father to Sir George Savile, of Thornhill, in the county of York, Bart., afterwards Marquis of Halifax. His son and successor, William, the second marquis, dying without male issue in 1700, the manor and lordship was sold by his father-in-law, Daniel Earl of Nottingham, and the other trustees for the marquis's three co-heiresses, to Hewer Edgeley Hewer, Esq., who died, without issue, Nov. 16th, 1723, when it descended to the family of Blackburne. It then passed through several hands, until it was purchased by the Messrs. Belsey; and from Thomas Belsey, Esq., the survivor of the two purchasers, it passed into the hands of the present proprietor, Lord Overstone.

† So says the "Denton Register" now before me, but the biographers of Sir R. B. Cotton date his birth a year earlier, following the inscription on his monument in Conington Church—"Natus xxii. Januarii mdcxx. Dentonise." The then commencement of the civil year in March would account for the apparent discrepancy. The mansion-house of the Cottons at Denton, having fallen into bad repair, was taken down early in the present century.

* It is preserved in Ellis's "Specimens."

As he died on the 6th of May, 1631, we may probably refer the demolition of Fotheringhay to about the year 1628. To form the nucleus of his new mansion of Conington Castle, he purchased the banqueting-hall of Fotheringhay, in which the Queen of Scots had been beheaded. This consisted, for the most part, of arches and columns, which are placed on the exterior of the north and west fronts of the ground-floor of Conington Castle, but which most probably stood in the interior of the Fotheringhay banqueting-hall, dividing it into three aisles—an arrangement adopted in many baronial halls. A very handsome and elaborately-carved ecclesiastical chair, placed by Sir Robert Cotton in the chancel of Conington Church, is traditionally said to have been that which was provided for Mary on her scaffold, and in which she sat to hear the reading of her death-warrant. But, although historians speak of a "chair" as a portion of the furniture of Mary Stuart's scaffold, yet, in the account of her execution, written by a witness of the event,* mention is made only of "a lowe stooke" on which she sat, and from which she afterwards "began to slide" the while the Dean of Peterborough was addressing her; for she was saying her own prayers, and this brought her upon her knees, upon the "faire long cushin" also provided for her. If this is correct, it somewhat interferes with the traditional history of the Conington chair. The contemporary painting of the execution, represented in miniature in the background of the Windsor Castle portrait of Mary Queen of Scots dressed for the scaffold (the beautiful photograph of which picture, executed by Caldesi and Montecchi for the members of the Archaeological Institute, is now lying before me), does not particularly help us to a solution of this difficulty; for, although it certainly does not show a high chair, yet it also omits the rails about the scaffold, and conveys an erroneous idea of its dimensions. It also does not assist us to any idea of the architecture of the hall; but on this point we do not depend upon the slippery ground of traditionary evidence, and are enabled to look upon the pillars and arches of Conington Castle as a veritable portion of the banqueting-hall of Fotheringhay.† Traditionary evidence—and, I fear, that alone—can assist us to some other details of the hall. That very interesting specimen of domestic architecture, the Talbot Inn at Oundle, is said to have been built from the stones of Fotheringhay; and its great staircase window, looking into the yard, is believed to have once lighted the Fotheringhay banqueting-hall; the wide oaken staircase, and the great entrance-gates, with their ponderous bolts and ironwork, are also supposed to have been brought from the castle. Other portions were used for the erection of a chapel at Fineshade, and for various buildings in the immediate neighbourhood; and since then, even up to the present day, the scattered remains of the castle, even to the very foundations, have been used for the repair of the navigation of the river, for the renovation of dilapidated farm-buildings, and for all those miscellaneous and useful purposes to which blocks of stone can be applied. It may, therefore, readily be imagined that any one who visits Fotheringhay with the expectation of seeing what are commonly called "ruins" will be woefully disappointed. All that such an one will see will be the mound on which the keep once stood, the inequalities of ground where the various divisions of the castle have been, and one solitary and

shapeless block of masonry (measuring somewhere about six by nine feet in thickness, and seven feet high) which has tumbled over on its side, not far from the river's edge, and has there been permitted to remain as the sole survivor of a destruction more sweeping and complete than almost any other in England's annals of baronial architecture.

THE SHANGHAI TEA-GARDENS.

EVERYBODY is more or less conversant with the peculiarities of Chinese landscape gardening from the paintings on the porcelain vases and dishes imported from China, and which may be seen in most of the tea-shops in the United Kingdom. Even the poorest classes have some knowledge of it, derived from the well-known "willow-pattern" crockery, which at one time was the prevailing pattern of Spode's stone-ware, off which the multitude dined; so that there is no kind of quaint scenery with which every one is so familiar as that depicted in blue tints on these plates, and which defies all the natural and artistic rules of perspective drawing. Here the bridge with steps, crossing the lake to a pavilion with picturesque eaves and lattice-windows, surrounded by a pretty zig-zag fence; there little islets in the lake, with grottoes and rock-work of the most formal cut; and everywhere trees and shrubs springing up of the most fantastic forms, above which two birds are flying. But why describe in detail what is familiar to all, and respecting which we can say, as a facetious writer has recommended in his account of this pattern, "For particulars see plate"?‡

In referring to that rude sketch of garden scenery in China, our object is to show that, apart from the absurdities in drawing, this curious landscape may be considered "a bird's-eye view" of a portion of the tea-gardens at Shanghai. Now that China is no longer a sealed book to the traveller, who in these days of "sun-painting" carries his photographic apparatus with him, we are no longer obliged to tax our imaginations, on looking at native drawings, to come at the reality of the landscape. Our artist has faithfully delineated, from a photograph, the central pavilion in these gardens, which will furnish a correct idea of the whole; although there are ample materials for a hundred different views among their mazes. This purely artificial place of recreation for the inhabitants of Shanghai was originally formed out of a swamp, and laid out at a great expense by the native authorities, where the smallest stone had to be brought from a distance of not less than three hundred miles. This circumstance made a deep impression on me when I first visited the gardens; and, as I crossed some bridges formed of hewn granite from quarries eight hundred miles distant, I could not but admire the taste and skill of the workmen, with the evident public spirit of the mandarins who sanctioned their construction, to render their low, swampy city somewhat picturesque.

* The pavilion in our illustration stands in the central part of a serpentine lake, and was fitted up for the accommodation of the more wealthy visitors; being isolated from the surrounding tea-houses for the general public, and having only one approach, by a zig-zag bridge. Great care and skill have been expended on the carving of the pillars that support the double roof of this building; although the figures are of uncouth aspect which form the groups designed to represent some traditional part of Chinese history, or emblematical of the passions. The lattice-windows have movable

* Signed R. W.—preserved in the Harleian MSS., and given in full by Mr. Nichols, pp. 63-71, by Archdeacon Bonney, and by Camden.

† See Gough's additions to the "Britannia" of Camden (who was a personal friend of Sir R. Cotton's), vol. ii., "Icceni."

screens, with beautifully carved cornices, where flowers and insects are minutely portrayed, true to nature, and altogether charming in effect. Besides these lattice-windows, there are others glazed with thin cut oyster-shells; both being designed to keep out the glare and heat of the sun in summer, which is very intense. Opposite this pavilion to the eastward is a rocky eminence some fifty feet high, from the summit of which a general view of the gardens is obtained, and the surrounding city, with the forest of masts from a thousand junks at anchor in the Wong-poo river. Here is reared a pile of stones, so varied in their disposition by the cunning of the artist that the visitor is deceived into the idea he is climbing a rock upheaved through the level land around. Intricate paths wind round it in all directions, with caves here and there formed by large boulders, as if worn out by time and the elements, and rough-hewn seats at every part of the ascent for people to sit down and admire the varying landscape. In the season flowers and shrubs of the most beautiful kinds formerly grow in every corner of this rock-work, perfuming the air with their fragrance. At the summit large slabs of granite form seats for the tired small-footed ladies, who in times past used to be carried up the ascent in sedan-chairs, to view the country round. On certain occasions the Taoutai, or governor of the city, would here entertain his brother mandarins from Soochow, Kahding, and the neighbouring towns to an *al-fresco* entertainment in the cool of the evening, when it would be unpleasantly warm in his yamen. At such times the approaches to the mount were guarded, to prevent the intrusion of the commonalty from the tea-houses in the other parts of the gardens. Then the wives of the Taoutai, and their numerous female attendants, would romp about as much as their goat-like feet would allow them, which it is surprising how they can manage to use even among rocks, like the animal named. That these mandarins had a regard for this artificial mount, approaching to veneration, is evident from the numerous tablets of marble and granite erected and built into recesses like small temples, whereon is recorded their names and the date of their governorship, with some appropriate inscription inviting the wanderer to repose, or a quotation from the great Chinese philosopher Confucius (Kong-foo-tsze), inviting his disciples to secluded spots for contemplation. These tortuous pathways and sheltered nooks were thus formed to surprise and delight the visitor who wished to retire from the bustle and turmoil of the streets that surrounded the walls of these gardens.

From this successful representation of nature in its wild beauty, the road leads through a succession of gateways and open trellis-work in the walls, which exhibit some of the best examples of Chinese architecture. Here a doorway in the form of a pear, with a window shaped like a leaf; there one like a butterfly, and the lotus-plant figured for a window; while a trophy of war-weapons is beautifully executed on a thin party-wall, pierced in woodwork. These peculiarities of Chinese architecture show that, though the Chinese are now the most artificial people on the earth, yet in olden times they studied nature closely in their designs. It is said even that the deformed feet of the women has been caused by their desire to make them look like the bud of the water-lily; and hence a small foot is named in Chinese "the golden lily." Numerous smaller temples and rocky eminences, with ponds and narrow streams of water, are spread all around, showing examples of works in nature and art among this curious people on a smaller scale than what has been described. Here some tiny pavilion is erected on a little island only to be reached

by a boat; while another fairy-like structure is perched upon an artificial precipice overhanging the lake. Another part of the gardens is laid out as a forest of dwarf trees, with a miniature waterfall, intended to give some idea of the great forests and mountain gorges on the Upper Yang-tze river.

On the southern margin of the serpentine lake a long row of tea-houses is erected, with a long paved space in front, where the humbler classes used to smoke their pipes, and quaff the beverage that "cheers, but not inebriates." The windows of these tea-houses are all glazed with thin oyster-shells, which temper the sunlight at noonday; while the stone pavement renders the place clean in wet weather, which would otherwise be a mud puddle. Close to this quarter is a large edifice used as a theatre, which entertainment the Chinese are particularly partial to, as evinced by the performance beginning at noon and not ending until midnight, during which time there is a continuous representation of pieces, with only a few minutes' interval between each. Within this building and in the adjacent tea-houses, with the open space in front, the inhabitants of Shanghai were wont to spend their leisure hours; and the noise of native revelry resounded through the surrounding groves until far on in the night. Here the humbler classes came to enjoy their pipe and tea, while listening to the squeaking voice of a public songster, accompanied by his pi-pa and the shrill clang of cymbals. Crowds of listeners would assemble round the story-tellers, who told sensation tales, and filled their bamboo money-boxes with the contributions from the audience; whilst jugglers, mountebanks, and conjurers plied their tricks and evolutions, and peep-shows invited the juveniles to spend their coins of infinitesimal value. In the palmy days of the Shanghai Gardens joy and mirth resounded through its quaint pavilions and refreshment-houses, awakening the echoes of the artificial rockery around; and the inhabitants smoked their pipes within its precincts, undisturbed in their recreation from the profitable labours of the day, where commerce had made the industrious trader wealthy and contented.

But, alas! times are changed for the Chinese. The foreigner is in possession of this favourite place of resort; and the Shanghaite no longer enjoys the scenery among the pavilions, lakes, rocks, and flowers that cost his forefathers so much trouble, time, and money to lay them out for his gratification. Where the merry throng sat and chatted, or walked about in their holiday attire, all is silent, save the roll of the drum and the tramp of French soldiery: where the quaint buildings resounded with the laugh and talk of young and old, rich and poor, in the pursuit of pleasure, naught is heard but the hoarse voices of the guard grumbling at their duties. Everywhere the lakes are becoming choked with duck-weed, and the rocky crevices that bloomed with the choicest plants of "the Great Flowery Kingdom" have been supplanted, and "things rank and gross in nature possess them merely."

Evil days came upon Shanghai and its famous tea-gardens some twenty-three years ago, when the city was captured by the British during the first Chinese war, and an Anglo-Indian force of two thousand riflemen and artillery was quartered in the gardens as the most secure spot from attack, and convenient for barracks. The Chinese abandoned the place to the "barbarian" troops; and these, with the usual Vandalism of a conquering force, commenced the work of destruction that has continued from that day to this, by tearing down the woodwork for fuel, and turning the garden-plots into receptacles for filth and rubbish. It is true,

however, that these Indian soldiers did not do so much damage as was subsequently done by the French, for they were restrained by their officers; so that, when they evacuated the city after the Treaty of Nanking, in 1843, the grounds and buildings were not a great deal

when the French consul caused the commandant to order his lazy troops to clear up the place, if for nothing more than sanitary purposes. Before this, the writer visited the gardens, and he could not help remarking what a falling-off in Western pre-eminence of civilization



CENTRAL PAVILION IN THE SHANGHAI TEA-GARDENS.

the worse for their presence. But the Chinese had no disposition to restore the place to its former trim gardening, as it was uncertain when it might be again occupied by hostile foreign troops. However, the gardens were again frequented by the people, and the tea-houses opened for the accommodation of visitors. But these were confined chiefly to the lower class, as the wealthier citizens had left the city in the unsettled state of affairs, and the mandarins considered the place desecrated from having been in the possession of the hated foreigners. Consequently the chief pavilions were shut up, and the beautiful walks, no longer exclusively open to the upper classes, became frequented by all and sundry.

This partial neglect of the gardens continued until 1854, when the Taiping rebels made a descent on Shanghai, and took possession of the city. Under the hands of these desolating hordes, it may be imagined that no care would be taken of the gardens, which they appropriated as barracks also. For two years and upwards the Taipings held the city, when at last they were driven out by the French; who thereupon took possession of the gardens as the head-quarters of their force, which they have held up to the present day. If anything, the French soldiers exceeded their predecessors in destroying and neglecting these beautiful gardens, until recently,

over Eastern was observable among the occupants of the gardens. Instead of improving, as one might have expected, or at least maintaining that which previously existed of Chinese skill and labour, there was evidence of a truly barbarous destruction and neglect. The art which had been displayed in ornamenting the buildings and walks was utterly contemned. Doors, windows, and bridges of the most curious workmanship were hewn down and burnt. In my endeavours to reach the summit of the artificial mount, it was with great difficulty I could find the paths among the tangled brushwood and across the broken bridges. I have no desire to throw a slur upon the character of our brave allies in the China war; but the disgraceful state of these gardens, occupied by their force for so many years, was not creditable to their character as the representatives of European progress in the Far East. Those who have visited the French soldiers in camp at Chalons will have noticed the trim, neat gardens improvised by them to make things comfortable, nay, ornamental, during their temporary location there. One would have imagined that the same discipline and tidiness were carried abroad by them, and that, instead of making further dilapidation of the buildings in these gardens, they would have filled up their hours of *ennui*, when off duty, in

repairing them and cultivating the beautiful flowers that were dying out from neglect. As already remarked, the desired improvement came from the late consul, M. Moboussin, who got the men, with assistance from some Chinese gardeners, to weed the garden, clear the lake and ponds of duck-weed, repair the bridges, patch up the dilapidated houses, and put things generally into better order; so that the place is once more assuming a pleasing aspect. But not a Chinese of any respectability will venture within the walls; so that the old character of the gardens as a place of amusement and recreation for the inhabitants of Shanghai no longer exists. No doubt they look forward some day to the French troops leaving the city, now that there is no apprehension of danger from the Taipings. But they are in no hurry to leave, where they hold such an excellent *point d'appui* in case of further trouble with the Imperial authorities. From the position of the rocky eminences I have described, in a military point of view is commanded the whole city of Shanghai, which could easily be bombarded from the heights without the force being exposed to attack. Under these circumstances, the day seems far distant when the Shanghai Tea-gardens will again be frequented by the townspeople and their families for purposes of innocent recreation.

S. M.

ANVILS.

THE labours of the smith and the farrier, the cutler, and numerous other workers in metal, are carried on in great part by means of reiterated blows upon the sounding anvil. When Handel ran for shelter from a storm of rain to that wayside forge which, we believe, still stands in the high-road that runs through the little town of Edgware, the anvil was the musical instrument which fascinated his ear by its clear, ringing pellets of sound, and suggested to his creative mind that immortal composition known to every lover of harmony as "The Harmonious Blacksmith." We are all of us acquainted with the music of the forge, with the sharp shrilly treble of the ponderous hammers and the roaring diapason of the angry bellows, together with the rippling talk of the excited fire; these have imprinted themselves upon our memory from the days of childhood, when we often lingered of an evening at the open door of the smithy, and watched the Vulcan-like labours of its swart occupants, while the red light gleamed on their stalwart forms, and the fiery spray scattered by their stout blows enforced us to keep a respectful distance. Next to those of the village church-bell, the tones of the ringing anvil were among the first that fastened on our young sympathies; and, live as long as we may, we shall never, on hearing them, cease to revive in some measure the early and impressive associations connected with them. Doubtless this feeling is general; and this must be the reason, we submit, why the anvil is such a stock image and symbol with poets, preachers, and rhetoricians, and serves so admirably to point a moral, to enforce a solid argument, or to illustrate the claims of duty to man's most manful energies. But now, setting aside all similes and symbols, and descending to the bathos of the practical, let us see who makes the anvil itself, upon which all the countless workers in iron and steel fashion their innumerable productions, and let us learn if we can how this indispensable implement is manufactured.

The anvil-makers, to whom the Black Country introduces us, work in gangs or sets, consisting usually of four men and a boy or stout lad. The business commences by welding a certain quantity of the best iron, made up

in good part, if not entirely, of scraps or pieces which have been used before, into a mass which forms the central substance of the anvil. The iron is brought to a white heat in the furnace, and is first subjected to the crushing action of a huge hammer worked by steam, beneath which it is turned and twisted about until it has gained a rough approximation to the desired form. It is then recommitted to the furnace, and when drawn forth a second time comes under the blows of the forge hammers in the hands of the workmen—one beginning the work, then a second joining in, and so on until all four are pounding upon it in rapid and regular succession. The strikers are guided in their work by the actions of their leader, each man directing his hammer to that part indicated by the leader's blow. An on-looker has no idea of this, and he is naturally surprised to note that under all their apparently reckless blows the glowing mass gradually assumes form and shapeliness. If the anvil were a small article of trifling weight, it might be possible to forge it whole from a single piece, as a farrier does a horse-shoe; but when it is remembered that the anvils which we are speaking of weigh from three to five hundred pounds each, it will be seen, looking to their conformation, that that is not possible. In fact, a large anvil is built up, as it were, of some twenty pieces or thereabouts. The corners which project at the base to steady it—the protrusion towards the beak and parts of the posterior projection, etc.—are all separately shaped and welded on by the rapid blows of the workmen; and, finally, there is the upper surface of hardest, toughest steel, which has in a manner to be homologated with the solid iron mass, so that the whole may be in perfect union.

The high temperature to which the workers are exposed during some of the anvil-making processes can hardly be imagined by one unaccustomed to such scenes. To protect them from the furnace-fire a curtain of iron plates is hung up as a screen; but it is no uncommon thing to see this screen itself red-hot, the men being yet glad enough to avail themselves of its shelter. The larger the mass to be forged, of course the fiercer must be the fire of the furnace to bring the metal to a welding condition; and, when the welding has to be done by blows delivered by hand, it is evident that the strikers must come to pretty close quarters with their work, and can hardly flinch from any temperature that can possibly be borne. It is a question whether the professed jugglers and soi-disant fire-eaters, who sometimes enter ovens in public, and sit there while a steak is cooking under their superintendence, really breathe air many degrees hotter than the workers at this arduous craft have to respire daily.

The last operation in the forging of an anvil is the welding of the hard steel surface to the main body, and it is necessarily the operation on which the efficiency of the anvil will depend. If the weld is not perfect, the whole result will be a failure; and it can only be rendered perfect by prompt, energetic, and skilful action at the critical moment on the part of the hammermen. The anvil is finally finished by tempering; and this, though summarily managed, is a rather portentous-looking business to witness. Five hundred pounds of iron at a red heat take almost as long to cool down as an angry man, and require quite a cataract of cold water to reduce them to a wholesome temper; the water flies and hisses off in steam which spreads in a dense cloud all around, shrouding everything from view; but at the right nick of time the fussy, sputtering metal gets a plunge or two in the pool beneath, and the affair is finished.

Anvils thus made will stand years of wear and very rough usage; but yet, with all their power of endurance,

they are apt at times to fail. By dint of unceasing hammering on their surfaces, the several parts originally welded together, or some one or two of them, will suddenly part company; and hence it is that a certain proportion of the anvil-maker's business consists in repairing old anvils which have become disintegrated by long service. Some years ago, however, an anvil was invented in which the liability to disrepair from this cause was obviated by a new method of construction. Instead of building them up in separate pieces in the mode above described, the inventor conceived the idea of forging anvils in moulds, thus avoiding the necessity of having several weldings of parts together and the consequent liability to disruption. By this plan the twenty or more parts of a large anvil are reduced to two (not reckoning the surface of steel), the upper half and the lower half being forged, each by a single process, in separate moulds, and afterwards welded together; which welding is not liable to part, inasmuch as the blows an anvil receives, being delivered perpendicularly, they cannot materially affect a junction which is horizontal, and are as likely to strengthen as to weaken it; and, further, their force and momentum are distributed throughout the upper mass, weighing, in an anvil of the largest size, little short of three hundredweight. The moulds of the two portions into which the malleable iron is forced by a shower of heavy blows are solid blocks of the hardest steel, and might with propriety be called dies rather than moulds, so stout is their substance and so severe is the pounding they have to undergo. The best iron that can be made is used in the manufacture of these patent anvils, and they are faced with the stubbornest steel. The labour and workmanship bestowed on them is not less than is required upon the old plan, but the result, as will be readily seen, is far more satisfactory.

These patent anvils, though well known in this country wherever heavy smith's work is in request, are perhaps still more prized in foreign lands. They are found in the forges and foundries of Holland, Belgium, Germany, and Russia: thousands of tons of them have crossed the Atlantic and traversed the United States, north and south, as well as Canada and the far west beyond the lakes. Their necessarily high cost does not prevent their reception wherever they go, and no tariff, however exclusive, will keep them out of markets, however distant. The reason is obvious: they are proof against accident and hard usage, and are therefore valuable everywhere, but valuable most of all in those half-settled or newly-settled regions where the effect of an accident could not be repaired. That is why the Harmonious Blacksmith of the backwoods, or of the diggings, or of the transpacific copper-mine, or of the wastes of Columbia, chooses to perform his serenades upon one of the homologous anvils, if he can, rather than upon any other. He is indebted for his favourite instrument to Peter Wright of Dudley, the inventor, who for many years past has superintended their manufacture, and distributed them throughout the best part of the civilized world.

The wages of anvil-makers are on a par with those of the best-paid workers in the iron country. There is but a mere trifle left out of a twenty-pound note when a gang of four men and a boy, who have been doing their best for a whole week, are paid their due on the Saturday night. Like all the winners of high wages, they work by the piece—that is, are paid by the weight of metal they turn into manufactured goods. As a rule, they are greedy for work, sometimes refusing to work at all unless allowed to work at all hours and do as much as they choose. As regards the wise and prudent use of

the large wages they obtain, that is another question, concerning which we are sorry to say we have not at present any very satisfactory report to make.

JOHN CLARE.

THE life of John Clare forms an interesting, though in many respects a painful story. The child of poverty, his earlier days were marked by much suffering—want not only of proper food for the body, but the mind also: for, be it remembered, in his time schooling was a blessing enjoyed only by the few, and good books a luxury denied to the great mass. It had pleased Providence, however, to endow the poor boy with a fine poetic spirit, and when a page of letterpress was to him an incomprehensible puzzle, the book of nature, beautiful as vast, revealed to his wondering eye mysteries and charms denied to many a learned scholar. As he walked out among his native lanes and fields, he trod enchanted ground. Every step brought him some new delight; and it is pleasant to see how tenderly, when more advanced in life, he approaches the lowliest even of God's created works, and how heartily he sings their excellences and beauties. In "Summer Images" we catch an insight of the man's tastes and feelings, when he says—

"Me not the voice of brawling pleasure cheers,
In nightly revels or in city streets;
But joys which soothe and not distract the ears
That one at leisure meets
In the green woods, and meadows summer-shorn,
Or fields where the bee-fly greets
The ear with mellow horn.

"The green-swathed grasshopper on treble pipe
Sings there, and dances, in mad-hearted pranks;
The bees go courting every flower that's ripe
On banks and sunny banks;
And droning dragon-fly, on rude bassoon,
Attempts to give God thanks
In no discordant tune."

And again, in "Wanderings in June:"—

"The woodbines fresh with morning hours
Are what I love to see:
The ivy spreading darksome bowers,
Is where I love to be;
Left there as when a boy to lie
And talk to flower and tree,
And fancy, in my ecstasy,
Their silence answers me."

John Clare was born in 1793, and the village of Helpstone, in Northamptonshire, has the honour of being his birthplace. His father was a day-labourer, only occasionally able to work, from the fact of being crippled by rheumatism. The account of Clare's early struggles, given in the introduction to his first poems, differs in some particulars from that contained in his Biography, fresh from the pen of Mr. F. Martin.* But be that as it may, we learn from both how much and how well he laboured against the difficulties by which he found himself surrounded. His parents cannot afford to give him even the humblest of school teaching; for at seven years of age he is taken from the care of Dame Bullimore, of whom he has learned his A B C, to tend sheep and geese upon Helpstone Heath. Here, we are told by Mr. Martin, he found a pleasant companion in one Granny Bains, the cowherd of the village, who was a woman learned in the signs foreboding change of weather, and who had a memory stored with a large stock of songs. These she used to sing to the admiring sheep-boy; and "sometimes the singing had such an effect that both the ancient songstress and her young admirer forgot

* "The Life of John Clare," by Frederick Martin. Macmillan and Co.

their duties over it." As a consequence, sheep, geese, and cows went astray. "But, though often disturbed in the enjoyment of those delightful recitations, they nevertheless sunk deep into John Clare's mind, until he found himself repeating all day long the songs he had heard, and even in his dreams kept humming—

'There sat two ravens upon a tree,
Heigh down, derry O!
There sat two ravens upon a tree,
As deep in love as he and she.'

It was thus that the admiration of poetry first awoke in Parker Clare's son, roused by the songs of Granny Bains, the cowherd of Helpstone."

At twelve years of age, John, by wielding the flail—a small one made by his father to suit his strength—is helping to ward off sheer want from their humble abode. Presently, however, his naturally weak constitution gives way. He takes the tertian ague, and is thrown upon a bed of sickness. He mends in a little time, but, while yet very ill, is compelled by poverty to go forth once more to labour. There are four of them—father, mother, John, and his sister, and father can do but little at times, and the out-door relief allowed by the parish is but small. Well, away he goes with a willing heart, though with a weak body. The farmer is considerate, and the weather fine, and the boy rallies. There is but a dark prospect after all before him, yet hope animates his breast, and he dares to look upwards. He longs, he thirsts for knowledge, but it cannot be got without money. By extra work he puts by a few pence. "And, when the winter came round," says Mr. Martin, "he made arrangements with the schoolmaster at Glington, a man famed far and wide, to become his pupil for five evenings in the week, and for as many more days as he might be out of employment." This schoolmaster is a Mr. James Merrishaw; thin, tall, and peculiar; called by his pupils "the humble bee." Clare soon becomes a favourite with the old man, is allowed the run of his library, a miscellaneous one, and toils night and day to improve himself in reading and writing. Not content with these, he grows ambitious to learn algebra and mathematics also. Anxiously feeling about for anything whereby he may lift himself up, this unfledged poet actually turns to the most unbecoming of studies, and drums away at them, long ere he discovers that his genius, at all events, does not lie in the direction of the abstruse. For two winters and part of a wet summer John continued his scholastic course, and, after quitting Mr. Merrishaw, filled up his leisure by studying, still in the company of John Turnbull, the son of a small farmer, whose acquaintance he had made at the Glington academy. John Clare's evenings with his friend came to a finish in consequence of employment offering at a small public house, the "Blue Bell," kept by a kindly-hearted unmarried man named Francis Gregory. Clare was to groom, garden, etc., and to have plenty of time allowed him for study into the bargain.

There is no greater argument in favour of our poet's respectability, modesty, and industry, as a lad, than the readiness with which people like Mr. Merrishaw Turnbull and Francis Gregory seem to have attached themselves to him and his interests. While employed at the "Blue Bell" John made a weekly journey to Maxey flour-mills, and upon one of these occasions fell over head and ears in love with a modest young damsel whom he chanced to see in the act of weaving a flower garland by the roadside. This was the Mary whom he afterwards so sweetly sung. She was the daughter of a well-to-do farmer; but, six months after John made her acquaintance, the father of Mary Joyce sternly forbade her to

see the "beggar boy" again. Clare never forgot Mary; and Mary Joyce never married. It was also while tending the cattle of mine host of the "Blue Bell" that Clare one day was shown by some lad Thomson's "Seasons." After a glance or two he is all on fire, wishes to borrow the book, but is refused. Learning that for one and sixpence it may be bought at Stamford, a town about six miles off, John determines to become the possessor of a copy. His wages are not yet due, but by little loans he manages to raise the requisite sum. And one morning, when the bookseller comes forth to take down his shutters, he is surprised by John, who has been long and anxiously waiting, hurrying into the shop and asking for Thomson's "Seasons." Struck with his customer's manner, and knowing most likely the importance of such a sum as eighteenpence to such a person, the good man very kindly let the young enthusiast have the book for a shilling. It was a fine spring morning, and the boy's way lay by Burghley Park. The trees were in tender leaf, the birds were eloquent of love and joy. He read his Thomson through, and then excess of delight overran his heart, and his own voice broke into song. He composed his "Morning Walk." This little episode is in itself a poem, beautiful in every detail. How natural his ecstasy at the first draught from the poetic fount! How reasonable his desire to have the means within reach of quaffing at will! How brave his resolve by self-denial to obtain the object of his wishes; for by nothing less than self-denial would he be able to pay back even the few pence lent him to complete his purchase; and how glorious the bursting of his young soul into song! We are told that many of his poems were composed while he was out in the fields and lanes, and written down at once in blacklead upon any scrap of paper that came to hand. John's next employment was at Burghley Hall, in the character of apprentice to the head gardener. This man and his assistants seem to have been, after the fashion of the day, considerable soakers; and the poor boy was soon lured into the degrading orgies which his fellow-workers frequently held at the "Hole in the Wall" hard by. The head gardener, to preserve his dignity, got drunk elsewhere. When our poet had been well-nigh a year at Burghley, in company with a fellow-apprentice who had grown disgusted with his master and the violence of one of the assistants, he ran away. They tramped to Newark-upon-Trent, and obtained employment, though at a very low wage. At length a longing to visit the old house at home, although the Clares only rented a fourth part of the said old house, came over John, and he resolved to return thither. He did so, sleeping by the roadside and in hay-stacks, and living upon bread and water during the two or three days occupied by the journey. His parents were as glad to welcome him back as he was to behold them once again.

For many years our poet went on his way, now light-hearted and joyous, now sad and full of misgivings. His occupation varied from gardening to field labour, from field labour to soldiering in the militia; and when he returned home at the disbanding of the Northamptonshire heroes, he came laden with more poetic wealth, having become possessed of a copy of the "Paradise Lost," and an imperfect copy of Shakespeare's "Tempest." Next he takes a brief sojourn with a party of gypsies, in whose everyday life he finds but little poetry and much dirt, and soon he returns to his olden occupations. In 1817, in companionship with a man named Gordon, he again quits Helpstone, goes upon tramp, and finds employment near Bridge Casterton, in Rutlandshire, at a lime-kiln. By working very hard Clare earns ten shillings

a week, some of which he carefully puts aside with a view to getting a better start in life. But, though so heavily worked, yet John was contented and happy; for his employment lay in a beautiful country, and his earnings enabled him to render occasional aid to the old folk.

all events for a season. His father, permanently crippled, was and had long been the recipient of out-door relief from the parish authorities. When in full employ, he was himself earning nine or ten shillings per week; publishing, therefore, at personal risk was altogether out



John Clare

His voice was well attuned to sing, and his spare moments were employed in penning the thoughts and feelings called up by his happy surroundings. Clare's life, it will have been seen, until now was one of real hardship. Oftentimes ailing, sometimes laid upon a bed of sickness, and not unfrequently half-starving, yet his spirit ever rebounds.

Despite every obstacle he went on growing and growing in mental stature, and in the capability to interpret the silent utterances of Nature, as well as to describe her beauties, until at length an eager crowd of listeners gathered at his voice to recognise in him a true born child of song. After Clare had grown, then, to be a man, and had read all that he could obtain, and written much, a quite natural wish grew upon him to give his poems a wider circulation than they had yet achieved. In fact, he felt a desire to publish, and went so far as to get out a prospectus; but subscribers came in such small numbers that he was compelled to abandon the idea, at

of the question. At length a mere accident brought about the

"Consummation devoutly to be wished."

One of his prospectuses, which, by the way, contained a printed specimen of his poetry, fell into the hands of a Stamford bookseller, and made so favourable an impression upon him that he at once sought out the author, and eventually, through his interest, Messrs. Taylor and Hessey of Fleet Street were induced to examine a collection of Clare's pieces. In the end, they not only agreed to take upon themselves the risk of bringing them out, but gave the author a £20 note into the bargain. The book made its appearance in 1820 under the title of "Poems Descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery." Its success was decided. An article in "The Quarterly Review" told the world what a wonder it possessed in a Northampton peasant, and the news soon spread. The healthful and charming tone of many of the poems at once brought the author numerous

admirers, and not a few real friends; and a second edition was soon demanded.

Here was a man who could not spell, and who knew little of grammar, taking the whole literary world by storm. A poor country labourer, with so finely an organized mind that he could feel and describe all the beauties of nature with the most loving and life-like fidelity, no wonder that John Clare was looked upon as a prodigy, and no wonder that the folk who run after prodigies ran after our poet. Still it must not be forgotten that many held out a helping hand to him from the purest motives. There may have been some who patronized him, but we think, from all we can learn, that the majority who gave him assistance and proffered encouragement were moved by the very best intentions. The means adopted to aid him may not always have been the happiest, nor attended with the best results; but still, for all that, the intention may have been perfectly good. We can easily understand Clare's protest when some of his friends set about raising a fund for his permanent benefit by soliciting subscriptions from the noble and affluent. His ambition was to support himself and those about him by honest labour; and, could he have possessed a few acres of land whereby to do this, he would, no doubt, have been a happier and healthier man, and spared, in all probability, the terrible fate which eventually befel him. A fund of £420 12s., through the exertions of Lord Radstock and Dr. Bell, with others, having been raised in the manner described, was invested, under trustees, in the "Navy Five per Cents." This, again, displeased Clare, because he naturally felt that it argued a want of confidence in him to manage his own affairs; but no one can doubt the motive of those who had collected the money.

The Marquis of Exeter had already settled a life annuity of fifteen guineas per annum on the bard; so that now, with what he could earn by field labour, his circumstances were greatly improved. With the first dawn of success Clare had married and carried home to his old father and mother his "Patty of the Vale"—a young lass with whom he had fallen in love while working at the lime-kiln of Bridge Casterton.

We have not space to follow step by step the career of our poet, and must therefore pass on. The success which attended "Rural Life" led to the appearance of the "Village Minstrel," in two volumes, the following year. In 1822 Clare is for a second time up in London, mingling in literary society, and, towards the latter part of his sojourn, much in the company of Lamb and Hood. When he had recovered from the collapse which he suffered in returning from the bustle and captivating, though deceptive, glitter of London, to the dull, unvarying round of village life, he began to look about him with a view to increasing his means. Including the pension of fifteen guineas per annum which the Marquis of Exeter had settled upon him, he had now a yearly income of £45; after all small means for supporting himself, wife, little one, and father and mother. Farming on his own account appeared the readiest way. An opportunity occurred which he thought would prove all he could desire, but the sum of £200, necessary to make him the farmer of some seven acres which were offered him, he did not possess. At this point he applied to one of his most sincere friends, Lord Radstock, "not to lend him the money," says his recent biographer, "but to take it from the sum standing in his name in the funds;" and he was much disappointed to learn that the trustees had no power to comply. After this Clare again fell ill. His means grew less sufficient every year; for a young family speedily came clustering

about his knees, and looking up to him for support. He hides his misgivings from all, and to give father, mother, and Patty means enough frequently goes entirely without himself. Under pretence of setting forth to call upon a friend, he often avoids the dinner-table, and thus spares the cupboard. In 1827 he is again before the public; and in the latter portion of a brief preface to his book, "The Shepherd's Calendar," apologizes for delayed publication, which, he states, was caused by ill health. There are some vigorous and life-like descriptions of nature in this volume. Speaking of March "many weathers," he says—

"Yet winter seems half weary of his toil;
And round the ploughman on the elting soil
Will thread a minute's sunshine mild and warm
Through the ragged places of the swimming storm."

How well we realize the fitfulness of the day, and the burst of springtide promise through the clouds! With heartfelt joy he greets the bloomy month of May:—

"Come, queen of months, in company
With all thy merry minstrelsy:
The restless cuckoo, absent long,
And twittering swallow's chimney song;
With hedge-row crickets' notes that run
From every bank that fronts the sun."

In 1835 his "Rural Muse" appeared, and again do we find him alluding to personal sufferings; a sad foreshadowing of the darksome days there were in store. Speaking of the poems now given to the public, he says: "They were written to please my own mind; but it will be a most gratifying addition to find that my old friends are as warm as usual, and waiting to cheer me with the welcome praises that encouraged me in the beginning, though ill health has almost rendered me incapable of doing anything." This book proved less successful than either of his former works, although containing some of the most beautiful emanations of his pen.

The nervousness and melancholy which, with his declining fortunes, had grown upon him, gradually increased into mania, till at length it was deemed necessary to put him under medical treatment and proper restraint. Accordingly he was placed in Dr. Allen's lunatic asylum at High Beech. Here he was kindly treated, and allowed to go about almost as he liked; and frequent were his rambles through Epping Forest. Taking advantage of the liberty allowed him, he one fine day ran off. After much privation he reached home. Having spent a short time with his wife and family in the most simple and harmless manner, the unhappy man, amid struggles and entreaties, was again carried off under the power of a certificate, signed by a couple of medical men, and placed in the Northampton Lunatic Asylum. There he remained until the day of his death. Amid our sad regrets, it is pleasant to remember that here he was always most kindly treated, and allowed considerable liberty. We have read somewhere that, only a few years ago, during the fine weather, he was almost daily seen sitting under the portico of All Saints' Church. The perfect harmlessness of his mania will be seen in this fact. Indeed, he enjoyed seasons of sanity sufficient to restore the old power of song so well that many charming poems from time to time were the result. The last volume of John Clare, we have stated, contained some of the best things he ever penned. We quote a single example:—

THE YELLOWHAMMER'S NEST.

Just by the wooden bridge a bird flew up,
Scared by the cow-boy, as he scrambled down
To reach the misty dewberry. Let us stoop
And seek its nest. The brook we need not dread—
'Tis scarcely deep enough a bee to drown,
As it sings harmless o'er its pebbly bed.

—Ay, here it is! stuck close beside the bank,
Beneath the bunch of grass, that spindles rank
Its husk-seeds tall and high:—'tis rudely planned
Of bleached stubbles, and the withered fane
That last year's harvest left upon the land,—
Lined thinly with the horse's sable hair.
Five eggs, pen-scribbled o'er with ink their shells,
Resembling writing-scrawls, which Fancy reads
As Nature's poetry, and pastoral spells—
They are the Yellowhammer's; and she dwells,
Most poet-like, where brooks and flowery weeds
As sweet as Castaly her fancy deems.

Two or three other brief extracts may please those
readers who are not familiar with his works:—

EARLY SPRING.

Winter is passed: the little bee resumes
Her share of sun and shade, and o'er the lea
Hums her first hymnings to the flowers' perfumes,
And wakes a sense of gratefulness in me:
The little daisy keeps its wonted place,
Ere March by April gets disarmed of snow;
A look of joy ope on its smiling face,
Turned to that Power that suffers it to blow.
Ah, pleasant time! yet, pleasing as you be,
One still more pleasing Hope reserves for me,
Where suns, unsetting, one long Summer shine,
Flowers endless bloom, where Winter ne'er destroys:
O may the good man's righteous end be mine,
That I may witness these unfading joys!

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

I love to hear the Nightingale—
She comes where Summer dwells—
Among the brake and orchis flowers,
And foxglove's freckled bells.

Where mugwort grows like mignonette,
And molehills swarm with ling;
She hides among the greener May,
And sings her love to Spring.

I hear her in the forest beech,
When beautiful and new;
Where cow-boys hunt the glossy leaf,
Where falls the honey-dew.

Where brambles keep the waters cool
For half the Summer long;
The maiden sets her pitcher down,
And stops to hear the song.

The redcap is a painted bird,
And sings about the town;
The Nightingale sings all the eve,
In sober suit of brown.

I knew the sparrow could not sing,
And heard the stranger long;
I could not think so plain a bird
Could sing so fine a song.

I found her nest of oaken leaves,
And eggs of paler brown,
Where none would ever look for nests,
Or pull the sedges down.

I found them on a white-thorn root,
And in the woodland hedge,
All in a low and stumpy bush,
Half hid among the sedge.

I love the Poet of the woods,
And love to hear her sing,
That, with the cuckoo, brings the love
And music of the Spring.

Man goes by art to foreign lands,
With shipwreck and decay;
Birds go with Nature for their guide,
And God directs their way—

God of a thousand worlds on high!
Proud men may lord and dare:
Power tells them that the meanest things
Are worthy of His care.

From the "Village Minstrel" we give some musings
of the peasant-poet amid rural scenes:—

O! who can tell the sweets of May-day's morn,
To waken rapture in a feeling mind;
When the gilt East unveils her dappled dawn,
And the gay woodlark has its nest resigned,
As slow the sun creeps up the hill behind;
Morn reddening round, and daylight's spotless hue,
As seemingly with rose and lily lined;

While all the prospect round beams fair to view,
Like a sweet opening flower with its unsullied dew?

"Ah! often brushing through the dripping grass,
Has he been seen to catch this early charm,
Listening the 'love-song' of the healthy lass
Passing with milk-pail on her well-turned arm;
Or meeting objects from the rousing farm—
The jingling plough-teams diving down the steep,
Waggon and cart; and shepherd-dogs' alarm,
Raising the bleatings of unfolding sheep,
As o'er the mountain-top the red sun 'gins to peep.

"Nor could the day's decline escape his gaze:
He loved the closing as the rising day,
And oft would stand to catch the setting rays,
Whose last beams stole not unperceived away;
When, hesitating like a stag at bay,
The bright unwearied sun seemed loath to drop
'Till chaos' night-bounds hurried him away,
And drove him headlong from the mountain-top,
And shut the lovely scene, and bade all nature stop.

"And here the rural Muse might aptly say,
As sober evening sweetly siles along,
How she has chased black ignorance away,
And warmed his artless soul with feelings strong,
To teach his reed to warble forth a song;
And how it echoed on the even-gale,
All by the brook the pasture-flowers among:
But ah! such trifles are of no avail—
There's few to notice him, or hear his simple tale.

"O Poverty! thy frowns were early dealt
O'er him who mourned thee, not by fancy led
To whine and wail o'er woes he never felt,
Staining his rhymes with tears he never shed,
And heaving sighs a mock-song only bred:
Alas! he knew too much of every pain
That showered full thick on his unsheltered head;
And as his tears and sighs did erst complain,
His numbers took it up, and wept it o'er again."

From his imitation of the 148th Psalm we quote
three verses, which show a spirit of true devotion and
grateful praise:—

"Bowing adorers of the gale,
Ye cowslips, delicately pale,
Upraise your loaded stems;
Unfold your cups in splendour, speak!
Who deck'd you with that ruddy streak,
And gilt your golden gems?

"Violets, sweet tenants of the shade,
In purple's richest pride array'd,
Your errand here fulfil;
Go bid the artist's simple stain
Your lustre imitate in vain,
And match your Maker's skill.

"Daisies, ye flowers of lowly birth,
Embroiderers of the carpet earth,
That stud the velvet sod;
Open to spring's refreshing air,
In sweetest smiling bloom declare
Your Maker, and my God!"

"The record of the last few years," says an article
which appeared in a Northamptonshire newspaper im-
mediately after his decease, "of our peasant poet's life
is soon made, for each day has been in the main but a
copy of the preceding day—the mind under a thick
cloud, the physical powers slowly but surely declining."

John Clare died on the 20th of May, 1864, and was
buried by the side of his father and mother in the
churchyard of his native village, in accordance with "a
wish" he had expressed in verse many years ago. His
widow, "Patty of the Vale," a son, and daughter, with
other kinsfolk, followed him to the grave, and all the
inhabitants of the place were present to witness the
solemn ceremony.

It was announced some months back that it was
intended to raise a subscription memorial over the poet's
last resting-place. It is further gratifying to be able to
record that the life-pension of ten pounds per annum,
granted to John Clare by the second Earl Spencer, is to
be continued to his widow. The profits of a new edition
of Clare's poems, about to be issued, will be given to the
fund forming for the benefit of "Patty of the Vale."

Varieties.

POST-OFFICE MONEY-ORDERS.—The institution of the Money-Order Office was suggested, in 1792, by two officers of the Post-office in answer to a demand from the Government for some mode of enabling soldiers and sailors to make remittances to their families. It was, however, originally established as a private undertaking of those officers under the firm of Stow and Company, and it was not made entirely official until 1838. The enormous charges—eightpence in the pound, with the addition of a Government stamp duty of two shillings when the remittance exceeded two pounds—together with the double postage at the then high rates which the sending of a money-order entailed, prevented much business being done; and, even though the rates of commission were subsequently somewhat reduced, comparatively little progress had been made before the establishment of penny postage; for, in 1839, the whole amount of the money-orders was only £313,090. We remember, in that year, having occasion to pay a visit to this office, which, after some difficulty, we found in St. Martin's-le-Grand, having climbed a high flight of stairs and passed along some intricate passages. There were, we believe, three clerks, who seemed to be by no means overburdened with business, although no other establishment of the kind existed in the metropolis. However, in 1840, soon after the introduction of penny postage, the necessity of diminishing the temptation set before the officers by the numerous money-letters passing through the Post-office, caused this branch to be placed on an entirely different footing. The commission was reduced from sixpence to threepence for remittances under two pounds, and, for those under five pounds, from one shilling and sixpence to sixpence. Money-order offices were opened at nearly all the post towns (and afterwards at many sub-posts) and in many parts of the metropolis, and the method of issuing and paying them was simplified. The result was an enormous increase in the business of the Money-Order branch. In 1839 there were 188,921 orders issued, remitting £313,124, while in 1841 the orders numbered 1,552,845, amounting to £3,127,507; and since that time the business has rapidly grown, until, in the year 1863, 7,956,794 orders were issued, amounting to £16,403,793!—*Edinburgh Review*.

EMIGRANTS IN NEW YORK.—A report issued by the Commissioners of Emigration for 1864 states that 184,700 emigrants landed at New York last year. Of these 89,706 came from Ireland, and 57,572 from Germany. The Germans generally bring means with them; the Irish land with nothing but rags and dense ignorance to call their own, with no plan of life before them, with no definite expectations even, and no object in view. The result is that the streets are infested with Irish ruffians, and Americans justly complain that upon them falls the discredit of crimes committed by people from our own shores. There are as many Irish to be seen any day in Broadway as in Dublin. They herd together here according to their unvarying instincts, the dirtiest and most depraved part of the town being invariably the Irish quarter.

PROUD AS A PIPER.—A certain noble lord, when in attendance upon the Queen at Balmoral, a few years ago, having been commissioned by a friend to procure a performer on the melodious pipes, applied to her Majesty's piper—a fine stalwart Highlander—and, on being asked what kind of article was required, his lordship said in reply, "Just such another as yourself." The consequential Celt readily exclaimed, with more than the wonted humour, "There are plenty o' lords like yourself, but very few sic pipers as me!" A good story is told of a small Highland laird, who contemplated the erection of a magnificent castle on a very limited territory, with reference to which one of his neighbours humorously remarked, "I wonder on whose ground — intends to encroach when he carries his plans into execution." This pitiable love of show is, of course, accompanied by a vast amount of discomfort, to which our more sensible English neighbours are utter strangers. The snug and cheerful mansion which accommodates an English gentleman with a sure rental of £10,000 a year would be regarded as insufficient by many a Scotch laird with an uncertain income of as many hundreds. Unfortunately the same tendency is discernible among our professional and commercial classes, who too frequently sacrifice real enjoyment to mere external display. In his letters from Scotland, written about the year 1730, Captain Burt refers to the ludicrous misapplica-

tion of terms on the part of the Scotch, with the view of acquiring importance. "A peddling shopkeeper," he says, "that sells a pennyworth of thread, is a *merchant*; the person who is sent for that thread has received a *commission*; and bringing it to the sender is making *report*. A bill to let you know there is a single room to be let is called a *placard*; the doors are *ports*; an enclosed field of two acres is a *park*; and the wife of a laird of fifteen pounds a year is a *lady*, and treated with your *ladyship*."—*Seton's "Nationalities of the United Kingdom."*

INDIAN RUMOURS.—It is a fact that there is a certain description of news which travels in India from one station to another with a rapidity almost electric. Before the days of the "lightning post" there was sometimes intelligence in the bazaars of the native dealers and the lines of the native soldiers, especially if the news imported something disastrous to the British, days before it reached, in any official shape, the high functionaries of Government. The news of the first outbreak and massacre at Canbul, in 1841, and also of the subsequent destruction of the British army in the Khyber Pass, reached Calcutta through the bazaars of Meerut and Kurnal some days before they found their way to Government House from any official quarter; and the mutiny at Barrackpore was known by the sepoys of the British force proceeding to Burmah before it reached the military and political chiefs by special express. We cannot trace the progress of these evil tidings. The natives of India have an expression saying that "it is in the air." It often happened that an uneasy feeling—an impression that something had happened, though they "could not discern the shape thereof"—pervaded men's minds, in obscure anticipation of the news that was travelling towards them in all its tangible proportions. All along the line of road, from town to town, from village to village, were thousands to whom the feet of those who brought the tidings were welcome. The British magistrate, returning from his evening ride, was perhaps met on the road near the bazaar by a venerable native on an ambling pony—a native respectable of aspect, with white beard and whiter garments, who salaamed to the English gentleman as he passed, and went on his way freighted with intelligence to be used with judgment and sent on with despatch. This was but one of many costumes worn by the messenger of evil. In whatsoever shape he passed there was nothing outwardly to distinguish him. Next morning there was a sensation in the bazaar, and a vague excitement in the sepoys' lines. But, when rumours of disaster reached the houses of the chief English officers, they were commonly discredited. Their own letters were silent on the subject. It was not likely to be true, they said, as they had heard nothing about it. But it was true; and the news had travelled another hundred miles whilst the white gentlemen, with bland scepticism, were shaking their heads over the lies of the bazaar.—*Kaye's "History of the Indian Rebellion."*

THE CHEAP PRESS.—The penny press of this country has now been in operation for a certain number of years. There were those who were led to anticipate that that organ would be a dangerous organ, that it would minister food to bad passions, and that it would tend to create jealousies in the country. We have now had a pretty long experience; and it is no more than justice to the gentlemen by whom that press is conducted—no more than justice to them, without the smallest reproach to others who have conducted a press of a somewhat different character—to say that every one of those sinister anticipations have been signally disappointed, and that these organs of public opinion, copies of which are sold at so cheap a rate as to find their way into almost every man's house, have been second to none in their regard for moral principle, in their respect for personal character, in their fidelity to the duties they have undertaken, and, lastly, let me add—for it is a vital element in the case—in attachment to the law and in loyalty to the Throne. And that press, in my opinion, has proved to be not only a means of conveying innocent and useful information to the masses of the population, but it has been a powerful political engine, contributing to the stability of our institutions, conveying home to the mind of the working man a sense of his interest in the country, and is, in point of fact, entitled in the highest sense to the honourable designation of a thoroughly Conservative power.—*Mr. Gladstone.*